(d) if not, by when it is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) M/s. Rites completed necessary data collection and technical evaluations during last summer and are now expected to submit the report of the Second Phase of the Feasibility Study by the end of December 1996.

Termination of membership of Telephone Advisory Committee Members

*398. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have terminated memberships of certain Telephone Advisory Committee Members (TACMs) during the last five years till 1996 abruptly; if so, the Circle/field unit-wise details thereof and reasons therefor;

(b) whether said Members made representations to Government against said terminations; if so, the detials thereof;

(c) the action taken thereon, case-wise;

(d) whether Government propose to restore memberships of those Members where allegations against them found baseless/unsubstantiated; if so, by when; and

(e) whether Government also propose to have said terminations investigated; if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The memberships of Shri Abhay Awasthi of Allahabad TAC, Shri Ernest Paul of Madras TAC and Shri Om Bharuka of Dibrugarh TAC were terminated before their respectvie terms expired, due to serious complaints against them.

(b) Shri Om Bharuka made representations against termination of his membership. He stated in his representation that the charges of misbehaviour, physical assault etc. levelled against him were not true. The other two TAC members made no such representations.

(c) The CGM Assam Telecom Circle was asked to make a thorough enquiry on the representation of Shri Bharuka. The enquiry established the charged levelled against Shri Bharuka.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) No, Sir, in view of reply at (b) and (c) above.

Indians to be rendered stateless in Hongkong

*399. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians likely to be rendered Stateless in Hongkong after its transfer to China;

(b) whether Government intend to take up the matter with Chinese authorities; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) (i) According to the statistics released by the Immigration Department in Hong Kong, the number of persons of Indian origin likely to be faced with statelessness at some, as yet indeterminate, future date is 3,190. These persons are defined as permanent residents of Hong Kong of Indian origin who hold British Dependent Territories Citizens (BDTC) or British National Overseas BN(O) passports but do not have any other nationality.

(ii) When Hong Kong reverts to Chinese sovereignty on July 1, 1997, those persons who can show proof of seven years of continuous residence in Hong Kong would be entitled to permanent identity cards providing them with the right of abode in Hong Kong. Most British Dependent Territories Citizens (BDTC) or British National Overseas BN(O) passport holders are expected to qualify.